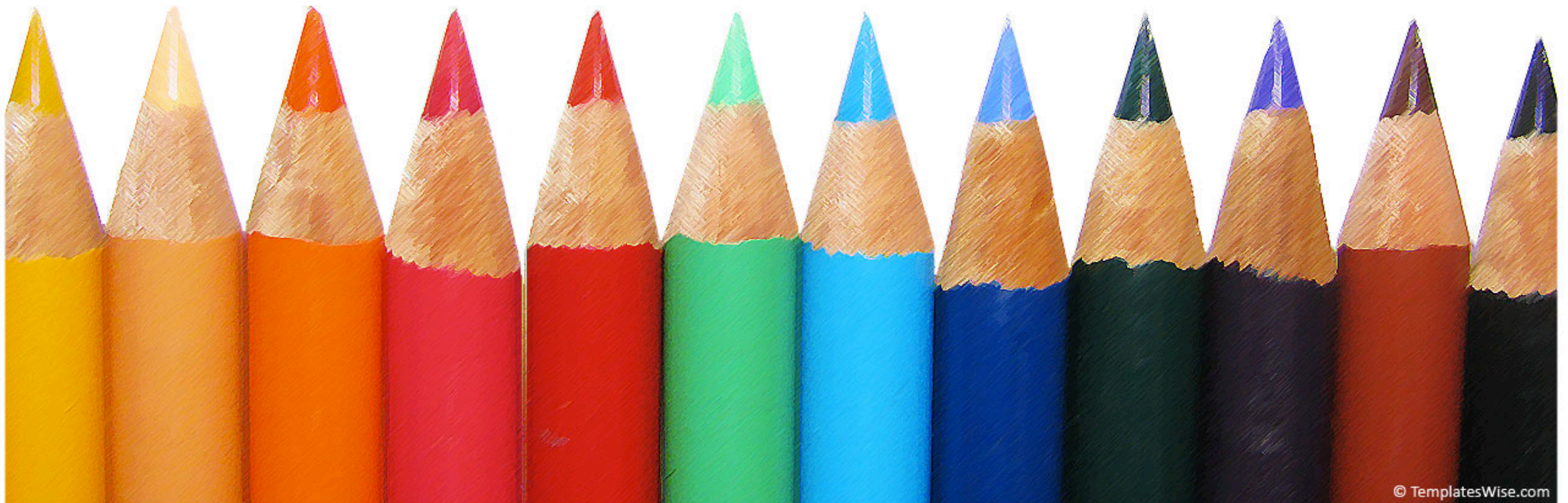


Full-Day Kindergarten Presentation to the Cape Elizabeth School Board

December 10, 2013



Full Day Kindergarten Proposal

- The Pond Cove School administration and staff supports the full implementation of a full-day kindergarten program for the 2014-2015 school year. Based on referenced research and empirical information gathered, full-day kindergarten is our recommended model to build the foundation for children's cognitive and social skills, providing the time for differentiated instructional opportunities and social experiences to meet a range of student needs.

Supporting Data & Justification

- Full-day kindergarten (FDK) provides consistency and equity in program length and learning opportunities for children as they enter public school.
- From 1967 – 2011, the percentage of U.S. children attending FDK increased from 11% to 77% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).
- 86% of Maine public schools offer FDK (Maine Department of Education, November, 2013).



Supporting Data & Justification

- The Common Core State Standards have increased academic expectations for all K-12 students. More time in the K classroom is needed.
- FDK will provide more time for early interventions using Response to Intervention (RtI) instructional and behavioral strategies to help bridge the achievement gap for Pond Cove's vulnerable cohorts.
- Approximately 15% to 20% of Cape Elizabeth's kindergarten-aged students attend private FDK programs each school year (based on 10-year span).
- 63% of current Pond Cove half-day kindergarten students attend another program in addition to kindergarten, creating a full-day experience during the opposite part of their day when they are not attending Pond Cove.

Goals and Expected Benefits for Students

- More opportunities for academic and social success
- Increased time for developmentally appropriate, structured experiences, such as exploration through play and guided social interaction with peers
- Fewer daily and weekly transitions
- Increased consistency throughout the week, reducing stress and building confidence and competency
- More time to develop positive school habits, attitudes and stamina
- More time for in-depth learning across all curricula



Goals and Expected Benefits for Students

- More time to receive pre-teaching, reinforcement, extensions and enrichment across the curricula to enhance conceptual and content understandings
- Increased opportunities for differentiated and extended learning experiences
- Increased sense of belonging within the larger school community, and having the opportunity to interact with students in other grades within the school
- Daily classes with specialists for balanced opportunities in allied arts
- Increased opportunities for building relationships with students and their families given there would be fewer students per FDK teacher (as opposed to the # of students within two half-day K sections per day)

Pond Cove Kindergarten Observations

A compelling benefit that was observed for FDK was time:

- Time for community building
- Time for social interactions
- Time for strategic interventions
- Time for daily instruction in all content areas
- Time to practice new skills



Pond Cove Kindergarten Observations

- FDK students appear to be very comfortable and connected to the greater Pond Cove community.
- Social learning opportunities are able to be more flexible in the FDK classrooms.
- More flexibility in overall scheduling and for access to students benefiting from related services in occupational therapy in the FDK program.

Parent & Guardian Feedback

- 89 parents/guardians of 97 incoming kindergartners selected FDK as their program choice in the spring of 2013.
- 50 parents/guardians of 98 current kindergarten students responded to a feedback survey distributed in November 2013. The following themes emerged from the survey:
 - would desire FDK for all students for equitable opportunities
 - concerns regarding financial burden placed upon families of HDK students who must find childcare for other half of school day
 - concerns regarding HDK students transitioning to first grade compared with FDK peers
 - a majority expressed that their children are handling school day transitions and routines well

FDK in Surrounding Districts

- **South Portland:** 17 years
- **Portland:** 13 years
- **Westbrook:** 10 years
- **Gray-New Gloucester:** 8 years
- **Scarborough:** 7 years
- **Cumberland:** 7 years
- **Brunswick:** 3 years
- **Falmouth:** 2 years
- **Yarmouth:** 1 year
- **Gorham:** Plan to implement during the 2014-2015 school year





FDK Visits to Other Schools

- Pond Cove kindergarten teachers visited FDK programs in 3 schools with comparative demographics -- **Falmouth Elementary School, William Rowe School in Yarmouth** and **Mabel Wilson School in Cumberland** – and gathered the following info:
- All 3 schools have allied arts for FDK students.
- All 3 schools have common planning time for their FDK teachers.
- FDK teachers in all 3 schools spoke very favorably of their teaching experiences.
- None of these 3 schools reduced staffing or increased class size in any area to accommodate additional staffing needed for FDK implementation.

FDK Visits to Other Schools

- Most common feedback: FDK students have extended time to learn, and teachers could dig deeper and practice skills with students on a daily basis.
- Other related themes: FDK students had more time for problem solving for social development and more time for projects such as plays, art work and extended learning.
- Pond Cove kindergarten teachers observed that FDK students in all three schools appeared relaxed and ready to learn.



Program and Budget Considerations

- Equipping 2 or 3 new classrooms and hiring new kindergarten teachers
- Addition of regular education ed techs (following the models of Cumberland, Falmouth and Yarmouth)
- Transportation
- Kitchen staff & equipment
- Building renovations needed to accommodate additional classrooms
- Allied Arts for all kindergarten students
- Potential for increased enrollment due to FDK program